

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5082

INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMCONSUL IZMIR

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, TU

SUBJECT: ISTANBUL TURKISH NATIONAL STUDENTS UNION
SEEKING TO INFLAME ANTI-GREEK SENTIMENTS

REF: ISTANBUL 975

SUMMARY: IN THE PAST TWO DAYS THE TURKISH NATIONAL STUDENTS UNION (MTTB) HAS SOUGHT TO INFLAME ANTI-GREEK SENTIMENTS BY A DEMONSTRATION AT THE ISTANBUL GREEK CONSULATE GENERAL APRIL 10, AND AT A PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 11. ALTHOUGH NO VIOLENCE OCCURRED DURING DEMONSTRATION, WHICH CONSISTED OF HANGING A BLACK WREATH WITH "HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN SEPTEMBER NINTH" (1922, WHEN ATATURK'S FORCES LIBERATED IZMIR) AND SINGING THE TURKISH NATIONAL ANTHEM, HARSH DEMANDS ANNOUNCED DURING PRESS CONFERENCE WERE CALCULATED TO STIR UP OLD HATREDS. END SUMMARY

1. THE ISTANBUL BASED TURKISH NATIONAL STUDENTS UNION (MILLI
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TURK TALEBE BIRLIGI, KNOWN AS MTTB) HAS EMBARKED ON A COMPAIGN

DESIGNED TO INFLAME ANTI-GREEK SENTIMENTS. TO DRAW FURTHER PUBLIC ATTENTION TO APRIL 13 "WARNING-TO-GREECE" RALLY (REFTEL), A DELEGATION OF MTTB MEMBERS LED BY ORGANIZATION PRESIDENT RESAT URPER HELD DEMONSTRATION ON APRIL 10 AT ISTANBUL GREEK CONSULATE GENERAL. GROUP AFFIXED TO GREEK CONGEN DOOR A BLACK WREATH LABELLED "HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE NINTH OF NOVEMBER" (1922, WHEN ATATURK'S FORCES LIBERATED IZMIR) AND SANG NATIONAL ANTHEM. NO VIOLENCE OCCURRED.

2. MTTB PRESIDENT URPER APRIL 11 HELD PRESS CONFERENCE (CARRIED IN MOST ISTANBUL PAPERS APRIL 12) IN WHICH HE SET FORTH DEMANDS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE BASIS FOR APRIL 13 RALLY. RECALLING THAT TURKS ARE THE DESCENDENTS OF THE OTTOMAN CONQUERORS OF BYZNATIUM AND OF THOSE WHO CARRIED OUT THE LIBERATION WAR AND THE NINGHT OF SEPEMBER, THE MTTB CALLED FOR:
(A) EXPULSION OF THD ORTHODOZ PATRIARCHATE AND THE RE-OPENING OF ST. SOPHIA AS A MOSQUE;

(B) TAKING "MORE DEFINITE MEASURES" WITH REGARD TO CYPRUS, WESTERN THRACE AND THE DODECANESE ISLANDS;

(C) TAKING ACTION AGAINST GREEK-TURKS IN TURKEY IN RETALIATION FOR MISTREATMENT OF TURKS IN GREEK THRACE, FORCING GREEK MERCHANTS IN TURKEY TO ADVERTISE THEIR NAMES ON THEIR SHOPS AND THEIR GOODS, AND CHANGING BLUE AND WHITE STREET NAME PLAQUES, SINCE THEY REPRESENT GREEK FLAG COLORS;

(D) DISMISSING THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR IN ATHENS FOR NOT BEING IN HIS COUNTRY OF ASSIGNMENT AT THE MOST CRITICAL MOMENT.

3. THE MTTB DECLARATION ALSO CALLED FOR AN "HONORABLE" (HAYSIYETLI) FOREIGN POLICY WHICH WILL BRING "GREECE AND HER DEFENDERS NATO AND THE US INTO LINE."

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE TROUBLE-MAKING POTENTIAL OF THE MTTB SHOULD NOT BEKQNDERESTIMATED, AT THE PRESENT TIME THE ISTANBUL POLICE AUTHORITIES DO NOT EXPECT THE APRIL 13 WARNING RALLY TO GET OUT OF HAND. WHILE FEELINGS NATURALLY RUN HIGH ON ISSUES INVOLVING TURKISH-GREEK RIVALRY, THE PRESENT DISPUTE IS NOT EXPECTED TO AROUSE THE SAME DEGREE OF EMOTION AS CYPRUS DID, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR EXAMPLE IN 1964. SOME OBSERVERS HERE SPECULATE THAT SUPPORTERS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES ON THE RIGHT MIGHT WISH TO SEE THE RALLY TURN NASTY AS GROUNDS FOR ATTACKING THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY-NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY COALITION. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, OUR BEST JUDGMENT IS THAT SECURITY FORCES, REMEMBERING PAST ANTI-GREEK EXCESSES IN ISTANBUL, WOULD MOVE FORCEFULLY TO PUT DOWN ANY VIOLENT ACTIVITES WHICH EXTREMISTS MIGHT BE INCLINED TO PROVOKE.

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